

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



CONTACT: Timothy B. Dunn

tdunn@cvrep.org

Office: (760) 296-2966, ext 107

Cell: (714) 543-6687

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December 29, 2022

**TONY AWARD WINNER
CADY HUFFMAN
STARS IN**

DIRTY BLONDE

By Claudia Shear

Conceived by Claudia Shear and James Lapine

Also starring William Ryall and Joshua Morgan.

January 17-22 & January 24-28, 2023

Single tickets are on sale now.



CATHEDRAL CITY, CA – Tony® Award-winning actress **CADY HUFFMAN** (THE PRODUCERS/Tony Award for Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a Musical, THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES/Tony nomination, THE NANCE, STEEL PIER) will star as American cultural icon Mae West in Coachella Valley Repertory’s new production of **DIRTY BLONDE**. The production will be helmed by Broadway director, Philip Wm. McKinley (THE BOY FROM OZ, SPIDERMAN) and Broadway veterans William Ryall (WICKED, CHAPLIN, GUYS AND DOLLS) and Joshua Morgan (AIN’T TOO PROUD, LES MISERABLES) will complete the cast. Described as a play with music, the production will include classic tunes such as “A Guy What Takes His Time,” I’m No Angel,” I Wonder Where My Easy Rider’s Gone,” “Perfect Love,” as well as the title song by Bob Stillman, “Dirty Blonde.”

When **DIRTY BLONDE** opened on Broadway in 2000, it collected four Tony nominations, four Drama Desk nominations and won the Theatre World Award. **DIRTY BLONDE** is as unlikely, outrageous, and as fascinating as

the indomitable Mae West. The iconic star, who remains one of the most talked about (and oft emulated) Hollywood figures, is the catalyst in this “Rolls-Royce of a vehicle” (*NY Times*). Her ‘dirty blonde to platinum’ career inspires two lonely young fans who see her as their hero and lifeline. As it will be with all things Mae West, this leads to a fresh, budding, funny and sometimes bizarre romance.

Set design will be by Jimmy Cuomo, costume design by Frank Cazares, lighting design by Moira Wilke and the Stage Manager will be John M. Gallo.

Executive Artistic Director, Adam Karsten, said, “CVRep is excited to be able to start the New Year with the exceptional talents within the cast of DIRTY BLONDE. It is the goal of CVRep to bring the highest quality, intimate theatre to the Valley and we are pleased to be able to do so with Cady, Bill and Joshua under the direction of Phil McKinley for this premiere production of DIRTY BLONDE here in Coachella Valley.”

Performances of DIRTY BLONDE are Tuesdays through Sundays, January 17-22, 2023 and January 24 – 29, 2023. Curtain time for Wednesdays through Saturday evening performances is 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m. Audiences Free Talkback Thursdays are held after every Thursday performance, offering audience members the opportunity to discuss the plays with the directors and casts.

Single tickets for DIRTY BLONDE are on sale now. Single tickets to DIRTY BLONDE are \$58, \$63 and \$73. Tickets are also available for ONCE, and HAND TO GOD. They may be ordered online at www.cvrep.org, by calling (760) 296-2966, ext. 115, or at the CVRep box office located at 68510 East Palm Canyon Dr., Cathedral City. Box office hours are Monday-Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and two hours prior to performances. Group tickets are available and can be arranged by calling the box office. In order to better serve audiences, patrons requesting accessibility assistance are encouraged to contact the box office at least 24 hours prior to their ticketed performance.

No one wants another cancelled performance due to COVID. In order to keep patrons, the cast members who are working in front of a live audience, and the CVRep staff and crew, masks will be required for all in attendance. Complimentary masks will be available at the theater entrances. Thank you for understanding.

Artist Biographies

CLAUDIA SHEAR – PLAYWRIGHT

Shear came to prominence with her self-penned autobiographical solo performance piece *Blown Sideways Through Life*. Her employment experiences (pastry chef, nude model, waitress, whorehouse receptionist, proofreader and Italian translator) provided a wealth of material for her piece, which she adapted for an the PBS series, “American Playhouse.” She wrote *Dirty Blonde* in collaboration with James Lapine and starred in the Broadway production, directed by Lapine. It received Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations for both Best Play and Best Actress and won the Theatre World Award. Other acting credits include the films *It Could Happen to You* and *Living Out Loud* and a guest appearance as “fake Monica” on the NBC sitcom “Friends.” She has also written for such publications as *The New York Times*, *Vogue*, and *Travel & Leisure*. Shear wrote *Restoration*, commissioned by the La Jolla Playhouse. She appeared in the Broadway production of Michele Lowe’s play, *The Smell of the Kill*. Shear also co-wrote the book for the new musical based on the book *Tuck Everlasting*, also titled *Tuck Everlasting*. The music and lyrics were written by Chris Miller and Nathan Tysen with direction by Casey Nicholaw. She starred in *Evening At The Talkhouse*, written by Wallace Shawn and starring Matthew Broderick at The New Group at the Signature Theatre in New York City.

JAMES LAPINE – LYRICS & BOOK

James Lapine is a preeminent playwright, librettist, screenwriter, and stage director. He is especially known for his collaborations with Stephen Sondheim and William Finn. One of his first successes was directing Finn's *March of the Falsettos* (later produced on Broadway as *Falsettos*). The musical won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway Play. He also worked with Finn on *A New Brain*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *Little Miss Saigon*. His first partnership with Sondheim was the landmark musical *Sunday in the Park with George*, for which he wrote the book. Lapine went on to win the Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical for Sondheim's *Into the Woods* and *Passion*. In addition to those Tony wins, Lapine has received seven other Tony Award nominations, five Drama Desk Awards, a Pulitzer Prize in Drama, and a Peabody Award. Lapine also directed the 2012 Broadway revival of *Annie*, wrote a stage adaption of the Moss Hart autobiography, *Act One*, and he wrote the book for and directed *Flying Over Sunset*, that features music by Tom Kitt and lyrics by Michael Klorie. In 1991 He directed his first film, *Impromptu*, which has a screenplay by his wife, Sarah Kernochan. He followed that with *Life With Mikey* for Disney. For television, he directed *Passion*, the film version of Anne Tyler's novel *Earthly Possessions* for HBO. Lapine wrote the screenplay for Disney's film version of *Into the Woods*, and wrote and directed the film *Custody*.

PHILIP WM. MCKINLEY – DIRECTOR

McKinley has directed record-breaking productions from Broadway to Salzburg to Tokyo. His production of *Spiderman: Turn Off The Dark*, with music by Bono and The Edge, is one of the top 20 all-time box office grossing productions in Broadway history. In New York City, McKinley directed the five-time Tony nominated Broadway musical *The Boy From Oz* starring Hugh Jackman, the revival of *The Most Happy Fella* starring Paul Sorvino at the New York City Opera, the Drama Desk-nominated comedy *Thwak*, and the cult Off-Broadway musical *Zombie Prom*. At the Salzburg Music Festival, McKinley directed *West Side Story* starring Cecilia Bartoli with Gustavo Dudamel conducting the Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. His more recent projects include a production of *That Woman - Wallis Simpson*, *Duchess Of Windsor* which was recognized as the "Pick of the Fringe" top five productions for the 2018 Edinburgh Fringe Festival. McKinley is currently developing the verbal-sparring dramedy *The Guest* with *New York Times* bestselling author Gregg Hurwitz; and a new biographical musical about the life of Ella Fitzgerald titled *Ella, An American Miracle* with Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award nominated playwright Anna Deavere Smith.

CADY HUFFMAN – MAE

Cady Huffman's name is synonymous with Broadway. She performed in *The Producers* (Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards), *The Will Rogers Follies* (Tony nomination), *The Nance* (OCC nomination), *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Chicago*, *Steel Pier*, *Dame Edna: The Royal Tour*, and Bob Fosse's last original musical, *Big Deal*. On television, Huffman has had recurring roles on "The Good Wife," "One Life To Live," "Days of Our Lives" and "Blue Bloods" as well as guest starring on "Younger," "Madam Secretary," "Master of None," "Difficult People," several of the "Law & Order" franchises, "Frasier" and "Mad About You." Her film work includes *The Sixth Reel*, *The Company Men*, *Dare*, *The Nanny Diaries*, *Romance and Cigarettes*. Cady co-created and stars in the web series *Cady Did*, which took home five 2021 Indie Series Awards. She has been nominated for two Daytime Emmy Awards and won an Indie Series Award for the digital drama *After Forever*. During the pandemic, Huffman directed Veanne Cox in *The First Anti-Vaxxers* for TRUSpeak and the original musical, *Electric Island*. Her directing credits include "Season's Greetings," "The Curious Incident of The Dog In The Night Time," the Jerry Herman tribute at 92Y and the original musical *City Of Lights* at SHE NYC. She is also half of the popular Jazz duo, Cady & Mary Ann. @cadyhuffman on Insta, FB and Twitter. AEA, SAG-AFTRA.

JOSHUA MORGAN – CHARLIE and others

Joshua Morgan's Broadway credits include a just-completed four-year run in the Broadway musical, *Am I Too Proud: The Life and Times of the Temptations*, having originated the role of the legendary manager, Shelly

Berger. Before moving to New York to appear in the most recent Broadway revival of *Les Misérables*, Morgan was the co-founder and artistic director of the Helen Hayes Award-winning organization, No Rules Theatre Company in Washington, DC and Winston-Salem. He was in the Off-Broadway production of *Stiff*, and has performed regionally at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Theatre Under the Stars, Folger Theatre, Triad Stage, Olney Theatre Center, among many others. Morgan has appeared in *Godspell*, *The Trojan Women*, *Burn This*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Children of Eden*, *Othello*, *Show Boat*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Sweeney Todd* and *The Laramie Project*. His directorial credits include *In Love and Warcraft* (Helen Hayes Nomination), *Medea's Got Some Issues*, *Touch, Incorporated* and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. Morgan has appeared in film and television, including "Law and Order, FBI," "Law and Order: SVU," "Law and Order: Organized Crime." NBC's "Lincoln Rhyme" and HBO's "Paterno." He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina's School of the Arts.

WILLIAM RYALL – JOE FRISCO, FRANK WALLACE, ED HEARN, and others

Ryall is a veteran of 15 Broadway shows and Original Broadway Cast Recordings, and five Tony Awards Broadcasts. Notable have been his performances in *Amadeus*, *Grand Hotel*, *How to Succeed in Business with* Matthew Broderick, *Anything Goes* with Sutton Foster, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Ryall sang "You're A Mean One" on the NBC 2006 Macy's Parade Presentation of *How the Grinch* ..., available to view on YouTube. He appeared in the motion picture films *Ricki and The Flash*, *The Intern*, "Synecdoche, New York", *Ascent to Hell*, and *Rick*. Currently, he can be seen on HBO's series "The Gilded Age" as Mrs. Astor's immensely grand butler, Mr. Hefty. On Netflix, Ryall appeared in season one of "Uncoupled" as Wilhelm Munch, the German artist. Additional television credits include "Marvelous Mrs. Maisel," "Little Voice," "Limitless," and "Quantico." He is a graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City.

Coachella Valley Repertory acknowledges the generous 2022-2023 Season sponsors: Nancy & Tom Cunningham, Barbara Fremont, David Hood & George Sellers, Peggy Jacobs, Doug Moreland, and Whittier Trust. CVRep also extends its thanks to Eight4Nine, sponsor of the 2022-2023 Season opening nights, and KESQ, media sponsor for Talkback Thursdays.



Dirty Blonde

January 17-29, 2023

STILL TO BE ENJOYED IN 2023:

Once

January 21-March 5, 2023

Hand to God

March 28-Apr. 9, 2023

DIRTY BLONDE

Dates & Times: Tues-Fri, January 17-20 & 28-29 at 7 p.m.

Sat, January 21 & 28 at 2 & 7 p.m.

Sun, January 22 & 29 at 2 p.m.

Tickets: \$58, \$63, \$73

To purchase: Online - www.cvrep.org
Phone - (760)296-2966, ext. 115
Box office - 68510 East Palm Canyon Dr., Cathedral City

Groups: Phone - (760)296-2966, ext. 115

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/CVRep/>

COACHELLA VALLEY REPERTORY is a non-profit, professional regional theater. It is the only theater in California's Coachella Valley that has Small Professional Theatre (SPT) status with Actor's Equity.

CVRep produces professional theater and educational programs that present thought provoking theatre of substance. It also offers professional level theatre training for young people and adults in its Conservatory, Writing Competition, and other meaningful, socially, and culturally relevant children's outreach programs. As a member of the Coachella Valley community, CVRep is committed to enriching the quality of life for all residents and to providing memorable experiences for the Valley's many visitors.

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